

What Is OVS?

- a.** An alternative way to start a tennis match?
- b.** A food service style where students serve themselves?
- c.** A new way to offer more food choices on school menus?
- d.** A system designed to decrease food waste and give students greater flexibility?



OVS: Who, When, and Where?

OVS is:

- Required for lunch at senior high schools
- Optional at lunch in lower grade levels
- Optional at breakfast in all grades

Who decides?

- School food authority decides whether to implement OVS when optional
- Students decide what foods (except the entrée at lunch) to decline, if any



What's for Lunch?

Students must be offered a lunch that:

- Contains a minimum of 3 menu items:
 - Entrée
 - Side Dish
 - Fluid Milk
- Meets nutrient standards
- Meets planned serving sizes

A menu item is any single food or combination of foods except:

- Condiments
- Foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) that are not part of another menu item



Menu Items at Lunch

Entrée:

- Combination of foods or single food item
- Offered as the main dish
- Central focus of the meal

Side Dish:

- Any other food *except*:
 - Condiments/garnishes
 - FMNV not in a menu item

Milk:

- Fluid
- Served as a beverage

One Menu Item — or Two?

Q: 1 or 2 menu items?

A: It depends on how you offer it.

1 menu item

2 menu items

Hamburger on a Bun
(entrée)

Hamburger Patty (entrée)

Bun (side dish)

Turkey and Gravy over
Mashed Potatoes
(entrée)

Turkey with Gravy (entrée)

Mashed Potatoes (side dish)

Burrito Grande (filled with
beans, rice, salsa, etc.)
(entrée)

Bean Burrito (entrée)

Spanish Rice (side dish)



Nutrient Standards for Lunch

Nutrient standards for lunch are established for the following *grade* groups:

- Preschool
- Grades K-6
- Grades 7-12
- Grades K-3 (optional)

OR

Menu planners can use nutrient standards based on the following established *age* groups:

- Ages 3-6 years
- Ages 7-10 years
- Ages 11-13 years
- Ages 14 years and older

OR

The menu planner may customize the nutrient standards to more closely fit the age/grade combinations in their schools/district. In addition, if only one age or grade is outside the established levels, schools may use the levels for the majority of children, regardless of the option selected.



Sample Lunch Menus

NSMP
(Grades K-6)

<i>Foods Offered</i>	<i>Menu Items</i>
Vegetable Lasagna, Italian Bread OR American Sub Sandwich w/Mayo, Mustard	4 menu items: Entrée (choose one)
Carrot/Celery Sticks with Dip	Side dish
Peach Crisp	Side dish
Choice of Milk	Milk
French Dip Roast Beef Sandwich, Oven Fries OR Nachos with Beans	4 menu items: Entrée (choose one)
Tossed Salad w/ Ranch Dressing	Side dish
Strawberry-Banana Fruited Gelatin	Side dish
Choice of Milk	Milk
Beef-Vegetable Soup w/ Crackers OR Fusilli Pasta w/ Tomato Sauce, Parmesan	5 menu items: Entrée (choose one)
Salad Bar w/ Assorted Dressings OR Assorted Steamed Vegetables	Side dish (choose one)
Whole-Wheat Roll	Side dish
Fruit Juice Bar OR Sherbet	Side dish (choose one)
Choice of Milk	Milk

<i>Foods Offered</i>	<i>Menu Items</i>
Honey Lemon Chicken, Brown Rice Pilaf OR Cheese Pizza	5 menu items: Entrée (choose one)
Seasoned Green Beans	Side dish
Orange Juice	Side dish
Whole-Wheat Sugar Cookie	Side dish
Choice of Milk	Milk
Vegetable Egg Roll w/Sweet & Sour Sauce OR Cajun Fish Filet w/Lemon	6 menu items: Entrée (choose one)
Steamed Rice	Side dish
Broccoli & Cauliflower Polonaise	Side dish
Chilled Pineapple Chunks	Side dish
Peanut Butter Bar	Side dish
Choice of Milk	Milk



Reimbursable Lunches

General requirements for OVS at lunch:

- Students must be offered the full planned menu in planned serving sizes.
- To count towards OVS, the student must take the full planned serving of a menu item.
- The student must always take an entrée.
- If the planned menu contains 3 menu items, the student may decline only 1 menu item. If the planned menu contains more than 3 menu items, the student may decline only 2 items.
- Students may take smaller portions of the declined menu items.
- The meal must be priced as a unit. That is, the student who takes 2 menu items (from 3 or 4 offered menu items) pays the same price as a student who takes all menu items offered.



Lunch Menus

(Grades K-6)

3 Menu Items:

- Taco Salad
- Watermelon
- Choice of Milk

VERSUS

5 Menu Items:

- Taco Salad
- Refried Beans
- Spanish Rice
- Watermelon
- Choice of Milk



Taco Bar Lunch Menu #1

(Grades 7-12)

Taco Shell

Seasoned Meat

Refried Beans

Spanish Rice

Chopped Lettuce

Diced Tomato

Grated Cheese

Fresh Salsa

Sour Cream

Guacamole

Baby Carrots

Cucumber Slices

Choice of Fruit

Flan (Mexican egg custard)

Oatmeal-Raisin Cookie

Choice of Milk

How many menu items?

Taco Bar Lunch Menu #2

(Grades 7-12)

Choose 1:

Beef Tacos

Bean Tacos

Choose at least 2:

Spanish Rice

Diced Tomato

Choice of Fruit

Baby Carrots

Chopped Lettuce

Cucumber Slices

Fresh Salsa

Choose 1:

Flan (Mexican egg custard)

Oatmeal-Raisin Cookie

Choose 1:

Low-fat (1%) Milk

Nonfat Chocolate Milk

Choose 2:

Grated Cheese

Sour Cream

Guacamole

How many menu items?

How many menu items if the menu said, “Choose 3 or more” from the first group of side dishes?

What's for Breakfast?

Students must be offered a breakfast that:

- Contains at least 3 menu items
- Meets nutrient standards

A menu item is any single food or combination of foods except:

- Condiments
- Foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) (that are not part of another menu item)

Menu items for breakfast include:

Milk

- Fluid
- Served as a beverage or on cereal or both

Side dishes—at least 2

- Any other food or combination of foods *except*:
 - Condiments
 - FMNV not in a menu item

Menu Items at Breakfast

Q: How many menu items?

A: It depends on how you offer it.

1 menu item

Ham & Egg on a Biscuit

Cereal with Sliced Banana

Cheese Toast

More than 1 menu item

Sliced Ham
Scrambled Egg
Flaky Biscuit

Cereal
Banana

Toast
Sliced Cheese

Nutrient Standards for Breakfast

Nutrient standards for breakfast are established for the following *grade* groups:

- Preschool
- Grades K-12
- Grades 7-12 (optional)

OR

Menu planners can use nutrient standards based on the following optional *age* groups:

- Ages 3-6 years
- Ages 7-10 years
- Ages 11-13 years
- Ages 14 years and older

OR

The menu planner may customize the nutrient standards to more closely fit the age/grade combinations in their schools/district. In addition, if only one age or grade is outside the established levels schools may use the levels for the majority of children, regardless of the option selected.



Sample Breakfast Menus

NSMP
(Grades K-12)

<i>Foods Offered</i>	<i>Menu Items</i>
Assorted Fruits and Juices	4 menu items
Assorted Cereals	+ fluid milk
Cinnamon Rolls	= 5 menu items total
English Muffin w/Jelly	
Choice of Milk	
Assorted Juices OR Applesauce	4 menu items
Assorted Cereals	+ fluid milk
Cheese & Egg Quesadilla w/ Salsa	= 5 menu items total
Toast Varieties w/Jelly	
Choice of Milk	
Assorted Fruits and Juices	4 menu items
Assorted Cereals	+ fluid milk
Pancakes w/ Syrup	= 5 menu items total
Toast Varieties w/Jelly	
Choice of Milk	

<i>Foods Offered</i>	<i>Menu Items</i>
Assorted Fruits and Juices	4 menu items
Assorted Cereals	+ fluid milk
Choice of Fruit Yogurt	= 5 menu items total
Assorted Mini-Bagels w/Jelly	
Choice of Milk	
Assorted Juices OR	4 menu items
Orange Wedges	+ fluid milk
Assorted Cereals	= 5 menu items total
Peach Muffin Squares	
Toast Varieties w/Jelly	
Choice of Milk	



Reimbursable Breakfasts

General requirements for OVS at breakfast:

- Students must be offered fluid milk and at least 2 additional menu items in the planned serving sizes.
- Students may decline no more than 1 of the 3 or more menu items offered.
- Students may decline any menu item, including the milk.
- Each breakfast must be priced as a unit. That is, a student pays the same price whether she or he takes 2 or more menu items.



Breakfast Menus

3 menu items:

- Toasted Bagel-Egg Sandwich w/ Jelly
- Orange Wedges
- Choice of Milk

4 menu items:

- Toasted Bagel w/ Jelly
- Scrambled Egg
- Orange Wedges
- Choice of Milk

5 menu items:

- Toasted Bagel Half w/ Jelly
- Scrambled Egg
- Orange Wedges
- Trail Mix
- Choice of Milk



Consistency Counts

Offer a consistent number of menu items at each meal, so that the same number of menu items are always required for a reimbursable meal.

At lunch:

<i>Number of menu items offered:</i>	<i>Students must take:</i>
3 or 4	2
5	3
6	4

At breakfast:

<i>Number of menu items offered:</i>	<i>Students must take:</i>
3	2
4	3
5	4

Don't confuse the cashiers!



Entrée Choices

Plan entrée choices similar in:

- Calories
- Food volume
- Total fat/
Saturated fat
- Vitamins
- Minerals

Examples:

Monday—choose 1:

- Burrito with Salsa
- Spaghetti with Meat Sauce
- Falafel Pocket Sandwich

Tuesday—choose 1:

- Oven-Baked Chicken
- Vegetable Chili
- Cajun Fish Fillet

Side Dish Choices

To promote selection of healthful choices, group side dish choices by type rather than all together.

Example:

Choose at least 2:

Tossed Salad
Carrot Sticks
Tomato
Cucumber Slices

AND

Choose at least 1:

Sticky Rice
Multicolor Pasta
Baked Potato

Rather Than:

Choose at least 3:

Tossed Salad
Carrot Sticks
Tomato
Cucumber Slices
Sticky Rice
Multicolor Pasta
Baked Potato

Production Planning Tips

To achieve the OVS goal of less food waste:

- Keep accurate menu production records.
- Use forecasting to plan food quantities.
- Use cycle menus.

School Nutrition Staff Roles

Menu planners:

- Plan consistent number of menu items daily.
- Communicate menus to other staff.
- Educate students, teachers about OVS.

Servers:

- Display food choices clearly, attractively.
- Encourage students to select a complete meal, via:
 - Enthusiastic comments
 - Age-appropriate merchandising

Cashiers:

- Review the planned menu:
 - Menu items
 - Serving sizes
 - Reimbursable meals
- Remind students of choices and unit price.
- Practice!

Cooks:

- Prepare foods according to standardized recipes.
- Portion foods accurately.



Meal Service Efficiency

Issue: “OVS meal service takes too much time.”

Solutions to try:

- Educate students and adults.
- Rearrange service area to improve flow.
- Add a cashier during rush times.

Issue: “Offer more choices?! Our serving space is already cramped!”

Solutions to try:

- Use smaller serving pans.
- Make three-dimensional displays.
- Utilize mobile serving counters.



Alternative Meal Service

Issue: “How do I recognize adequate portions in self-service situations?”

Solutions to try:

- Know the planned portion sizes.
- Plan consistent portions of similar foods.
- Pre-portion some foods.
- Use portion control serving utensils where feasible.
- Display a sample portion for students and cashiers.
- Educate students, adults.

Issue: “How do we implement OVS with a pre-pack or pre-plate delivery system?”

Solutions to try:

- Individually portion or package each menu item.
- Convert to modified bulk delivery (portion some items at point of service).



Teaching Students

Concerns:

- Number of items to select
- Must take an entrée at lunch
- Portion sizes
- Pricing

Strategies:

- Encourage students to select complete meals
- Use age-appropriate materials (posters, table tents, other signs) at the point of service.
- Promote consistent, key messages.
- Give hands-on demonstrations.
- Enlist teachers' help.
- Remind them again and again.

Convincing Administrators

Concerns:

- Slow meal service
- What benefits?

Strategies:

- Participation in planning
- Presentation of goals, benefits
- Demonstration of meal service
- Open communication

Educating Teachers

Teacher's Concerns:

- Slow meal service
- Students won't make wise food choices.

Strategies:

- Participation in planning
- Presentation of goals, benefits
- Demonstration of meal service
- Collaboration to educate students
- Open communication

Key points:

- Students can make their own food selections, but must select an entrée at lunch.
- Students may refuse any side dish or milk.
- We encourage students to take complete meals.
- Show how many items students may decline at breakfast and at lunch.

Promoting to Parents

Parents' Concerns:

- Students should take and eat all foods
- Students can't make wise food choices
- Kids won't get enough to eat
- Same price for less food

Strategies:

- Presentation of goals, benefits
- Invite them to observe meal service
- Newsletter updates
- Open communication

Key messages:

- Students can make food selections, and will more likely eat what they select.
- It's up to parents, and other adults to teach kids—by example—to make healthful choices.
- Students are encouraged to select all foods.
- Policy for extra portions at extra cost is unaffected by OVS.

Training School Nutrition Staff

Staff Concerns:

- Resistance to change
- Time and space limitations
- Sympathy for students

Strategies:

- Understand reasons for changes.
- Recall the benefits of OVS.
- Set realistic goals, implement gradually.
- Keep communication open.
- Reward success!

